

AKHBAR : BERITA HARIAN  
MUKA SURAT : 6  
RUANGAN : NASIONAL

## Persatuan gesa KKM tegas laksana Akta 852



Penguatkuasaan undang-undang merokok baharu dapat meningkatkan kualiti kesihatan rakyat. (Foto fail NSTP)

**Georgetown:** Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang (CAP) menggesa Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) tegas melaksanakan Akta Kawalan Produk Merokok bagi Kesihatan Awam 2024 (Akta 852) dan tidak mengadakan sebarang perbincangan dengan industri komersial mengenainya.

Pegawai Pendidikannya, NV Subbarow, berkata Akta 852 adalah undang-undang yang sudah lama dinantikan rakyat untuk menjadi pelindung dan penyelamat kepada beribu-ribu nyawa generasi muda dan golongan bukan perokok.

Katanya, penguatkuasaan undang-undang merokok baharu itu dapat meningkatkan kesih-

tan dengan mewujudkan budaya yang mengurangkan pendedahan kepada tembakau dan produk merokok lain serta asap rokok terpakai.

"Akta 852 boleh menyokong perokok berhenti dan tidak menggalakkan orang ramai mengambil tabiat itu, sekali gus ia memberi jaminan kesihatan kepada orang ramai.

"Bagaimanapun, kita tahu terdapat juga beberapa industri komersial seperti restoran makanan, minuman dan kedai runcit yang menentang Akta 852. Jadi, kita meminta KKM tidak melayan cadangan atau nasihat daripada industri komersial ini," katanya menerusi kenya-

taan, semalam.

Media pada 7 Oktober lalu melaporkan gesaan Persekutuan Persatuan Peniaga Barang Runcit Malaysia (FSGMAM) terhadap KKM supaya menangguhkan pelaksanaan larangan pameran produk merokok mengikut AKTA 852.

Presiden FSGMAM, Hong Chee Meng mendakwa, ia dilaksanakan secara tergesa-gesa tanpa sebarang perundingan dengan peruncit mengenai tempoh pematuhan.

Mengulas lanjut, Subbarow berkata, perlu ada sekatan ketat terhadap pembekalan, pengiklanan, paparan dan promosi produk merokok.

AKHBAR : UTUSAN MALAYSIA  
MUKA SURAT : 2  
RUANGAN : DALAM NEGERI

## *Toleransi sifar terhadap kes buli di hospital tidak cukup tanpa tindakan*

BARU-BARU ini dilaporkan mengenai kes kematian pakar patologi di Hospital Lahad Datu, Sabah yang didakwa membunuh diri selepas menjadi mangsa buli. Doktor Tay Tien Yaa, 30, ditemui mati di unit sewaan pada 29 Ogos lalu. Keluarganya menyalahkan Kementerian Kesihatan berikutan kejadian itu. Insiden itu mendapat liputan selepas adiknya, yang menggunakan nama YS Tay di Facebook mendakwa Tay Tien yang melapor diri di Hospital Lahad Datu pada Februari lalu, meninggal dunia akibat tekanan dan menjadi mangsa buli.

Dia berkata, kakaknya yang baharu berkahwin dijanjikan oleh pihak pengurusan akan dipindahkan kembali ke Semenanjung untuk bersama suaminya selepas dua tahun perkhidmatan.

Kementerian Kesihatan dengan segera mengarahkan siasatan berhubung kematian pakar patologi. Menteri, Datuk Seri Dr. Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, beliau tidak bertolak ansur terhadap isu buli sejak 2018 dan kekal dengan dasar itu.

"Kesemua kakitangan KKM berhak mendapat persekitaran pekerjaan yang adil dan selamat," katanya di laman X.

Beliau mengulangi dia mempunyai toleransi sifar terhadap sebarang kes buli di hospital. Tragedi Tay Tien berlaku ketika wujud persekitaran kerja teruk dan perbuatan buli terhadap kakitangan kesihatan yang berlaku di hospital kerajaan di Sabah oleh pegawai senior. Ada dakwaan doktor berhadapan penderaan lisan dan fizikal di hospital, termasuk cemuhan, cercaan perkauman dan ancaman kerana tidak mengikut arahan.

Untuk mengetahui apa sebenarnya berlaku satu pasukan khas dengan pakar-pakar diwujudkan Kementerian Kesihatan. Sementara menanti hasil siasatan, apa yang berlaku terhadap Tay Tien adalah satu tragedi. Seorang pakar patologi pada usia sebegitu muda hilang kerana masalah yang berlarutan selama berdekad. Seorang suami kehilangan isterinya. Seorang adik kehilangan kakaknya. Sistem perubatan negara yang sememangnya ketandusan pakar, kehilangan seorang individu yang sekiranya dijaga mampu menyumbang kepekaraannya kepada bidang perubatan selama 30 tahun lagi.

Pujian kepada menteri kesihatan terhadap toleransi sifar isu buli di hospital. Tetapi prinsip dan falsafah tidak berjaya menyelamatkan Tay Tien. Berpuluh ribu lagi doktor masih berkhidmat dalam sistem yang sememangnya dibiarkan membarah dengan tindakan seperti ini.

Berapa banyak aduan diterima kementerian sejak puluhan tahun lalu dan berapa banyak tindakan diambil. Bagaimana dengan laporan kes buli di Pulau Pinang dan Perak? Adakah semuanya disapu ke bawah karpet?

Rakyat berhak tahu apa tindakan yang diambil kerana sistem kesihatan adalah tunjang kesejahteraan negara. Adakah hanya toleransi sifar mengubah sikap kebinatangan dalam diri manusia? Jika itu benar, dunia pastinya lebih aman.

Tiada siapa bertanya kalau doktor *on-call*, bila kali terakhir mereka dapat makan atau bila mereka berhenti untuk sembahyang? Bagaimana dengan SOP mengenai masa rehat atau mesti rehat atau tempoh waktu kerja? Kita ada hospital dibina 30 tahun lalu dengan jumlah katil tertentu. 30 tahun lalu jumlah penduduk adalah 15 juta. Hari ini 32 juta. Matematik mungkin bukan mata pelajaran kegemaran penggubal dasar. Itu sebabnya sistem kesihatan berhadapan tekanan, masalah dan hampir pecah. Jika ini berterusan, nanti setiap ibu bapa akan memberitahu anak mereka, pilih apa saja kerjaya kecuali menjadi doktor. Ketika itu kita akan ada sifar doktor.

**Mohamad Azlan Jaafar adalah Pengarang Kumpulan Media Mulla Sdn. Bhd.**



AKHBAR : THE STAR  
MUKA SURAT : 5  
RUANGAN : NATION

# Miracle boost or marketing hype?

## Health experts and consumers weigh in on the value of taking supplements

By CHARLES RAMENDRAN  
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**PETALING JAYA:** It is an issue that is often debated among health professionals and consumers at large – the value of taking nutritional supplements.

With limited evidence to show they offer significant health benefits, medical experts are generally of the view that a balanced diet of natural foods and keeping an active lifestyle are key to maintaining optimum health.

A study published online in 2018 by the Journal of the American College of Cardiology found that the four most commonly used supplements – multivitamins, vitamin D, calcium and vitamin C – did not protect against cardiovascular disease.

Consultant cardiologist and electrophysiologist Dr Sathvinder Singh Gian Singh of Sultan Idris Shah Hospital's heart centre in Serdang said vitamins and health supplements were not "silver bullets" to cure or keep diseases at bay.

He said overconsumption of certain vitamins and supplements could have an adverse effect on

health, adding that the key was to obtain vitamins from a diet of natural foods complemented with regular exercise.

"Studies have shown that fish oil supplements may cause heart arrhythmia while too much Vitamin C may lead to kidney stones.

"And too many calcium pills may cause a build-up of arterial plaque. In most cases, people are taking supplements that they do not need under the notion that it will keep them healthy. This is how the supplement industry thrives," he said in an interview.

Dr Sathvinder said routine use of supplements was unnecessary, adding that these should only be prescribed when there were specific deficiencies of vitamins or minerals due to health conditions or dietary restrictions.

Prescription of supplements should only be done after clinical tests and evaluations were carried out by healthcare personnel, he pointed out.

"For instance, a patient deficient in iron can be prescribed with iron and folic acid supplements, while those with osteoporosis will need bisphosphonates. "Some patients with irritable

bowel syndrome may require probiotics after consulting a gastroenterologist.

"No supplement should be consumed routinely without ascertaining if there is a need for it, or just on assumption. Nothing can replace a healthy diet and routine exercise," he added.

(Bisphosphonates are a drug or substance used to treat hypercalcemia or abnormally high blood calcium and bone pain caused by some types of cancer.)

Former Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) president Prof Datuk Dr M. Subramaniam said regular exercise is essential in keeping healthy.

"There is no need for rigorous exercise. Just moderate stretches and exercise to maintain muscle mass several times a week is adequate. Walking is the best," he added.

Dr Subramaniam said supplements should not be consumed without the advice of a medical professional.

"There are supplements meant for specific deficiencies and in such cases, it is good. However, do not grab and consume without knowing its use," he added.

Supplements, according to dietitian Fiona Lai, should "fill in the gaps of a healthy diet" rather than replace it.

"You cannot rely on them to offset the effects of an unhealthy lifestyle or poor dietary habits. Those who use supplements should also be aware of what they are taking and if they are necessary.

"They should also be aware of the dosage and not overdo it. It is always best to consult medical professionals and reveal one's health history before starting on supplements," she said.

Fiona said the need for supplements varies and is dependent on an individual's health conditions.

"If you have deficiencies in certain vitamins or minerals or health conditions, supplements can be helpful. Vegetarians may lack vitamin B and those with lactose intolerance may be calcium deficient," she added.

Dr Charles Hedwig Fernandez, a family doctor who specialises in functional and preventive medicine, however, encourages the intake of vitamins and minerals at least minimally to obtain nutrients absent in daily meals.

He said the modern-day diet

was insufficient in providing essential nutrients and that certain foods sold at eateries could be detrimental to health.

"Many diseases are preventable with the use of supplements, which we should take before the damage is done to our bodies.

"We consume food cooked with vegetable seed oils from soy or corn, which are not healthy in large quantities.

"To counter the ill effects of such foods, we should use antioxidant supplements," said the doctor of over 25 years who is a strong advocate of supplements and bioidentical hormone therapy.

Dr Fernandez said he has witnessed positive outcomes from the use of supplements he has prescribed to patients.

"My patients have benefited immensely with improvements in health. As we age, the production of natural hormones slows down and we may not get the nutrients we need," he added.

Dr Fernandez cautioned against the use of certain vitamins and minerals, such as calcium, which he said should only be taken if a patient suffered an acute deficiency.

## Price doesn't seem to be an issue

By RAGANANTHINI VETHASALAM  
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**PETALING JAYA:** Malaysia's multibillion-ringgit dietary supplements market is not seeing any waning demand, despite increasing prices and another hike expected next year.

Malaysian Dietary Supplement Association (Madsa) president Datuk Dr M. Rajen said prices have been on the upward trend due to several factors such as an increase in overall cost and the currency exchange rate.

"And there is a tax on incoming supplements. We think this is not right as there is no tax on imported pharmaceuticals," he said.

He anticipates a price increase of between 3% and 8% next year, after factoring in the Sales and Service Tax (SST).

Dr Rajen, a holistic health expert, said raw ingredients were usually sourced from the United States, Europe, China, India, Japan and South Korea, with completed supplements also imported from Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

A Malaysian Community Pharmacy Guild (MCPG) spokesman said the cost of materials was rising due to high demand and a shortage as well as logistics issues.

She said fish oil and vitamin C were some of the supplements that were expected to see a price hike, but added that the appreciation of the ringgit could cushion or negate the effect.

She advised consumers against buying supplements sold cheaply online, saying they could be fake.

The spokesman advised consumers to check whether a product was registered to verify if it was genuine.



"Always seek professional advice. Read labels, be a wise consumer, don't just follow trends because of some viral hot product online," she added.

A local supplements manufacturer said an annual increase in raw material prices was common, predicting a 3% to 5% increase next year.

"The situation will become worse if the government increases the national minimum wage," the manufacturer said on condition of anonymity, referring to supplements manufactured locally.

In 2023, Malaysia's vitamins and supplements market was valued at US\$1.14bil (RM4.87bil),

according to a report published by research firm Euromonitor International.

The same report also stated that the industry was forecast to grow up to US\$1.66bil (RM7.08bil) by 2028.

Presently, a 5% SST is imposed on dietary supplements, in addition to a 5% import duty for certain finished products.

Like many Malaysians, a retiree who wanted to be known only as John, confessed to being a "pill-popper", in reference to the myriad supplements he takes daily.

"I have a cupboard full of them. Vitamin C, B complex, D and multivitamins. I have supplements

for magnesium and alpha lipoic acid too," said the 60-year-old.

He said imported supplements were becoming more expensive and he was thinking about improving his diet and exercising more.

"I asked a friend who went to Europe recently to get me a bottle of multivitamins. But I think for the long-term, I may need to relook into my dietary and exercise needs," he said.

Photographer K. Ariffin said most of his friends were regular supplement users.

"My boss consumes supplements more than he eats rice!" he quipped.



AKHBAR : THE STAR  
MUKA SURAT : 11  
RUANGAN : NATION

# Trainee nurse intake to be doubled

## Health Ministry aims to address the ongoing shortage of workers in M'sia

By SANDRA SOKIAL  
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**KOTA KINABALU:** To address the ongoing shortage of healthcare workers in the country, the Health Ministry is aiming to double the intake of nurse trainees.

The increase in nurse trainees will help meet current demand, particularly with private colleges resuming diploma courses in nursing as of Aug 1 this year, said Deputy Health Minister Datuk Lukanisman Awang Sauni.

He acknowledged the ongoing

challenge of filling healthcare positions, especially with the expansion of hospitals and clinics nationwide.

"We are struggling to fill all the positions. Therefore, we will be increasing the number of nurse trainees from 1,000 to 2,000 annually," Lukanisman said at the Health Ministry Training Institute (ILKKM) graduation ceremony on Saturday.

Currently, the nurse-to-population ratio in Sabah stands at 1:368, which is below the World Health Organisation-recommended 1:200.

Lukanisman said the ministry is committed to improving these numbers by attracting more Sabah youth to join the health sector through various programmes and initiatives.

"This year alone, ILKKM received a record-breaking 3.4 million applications, with 32% coming from Sabah," he added.

Earlier this year, Deputy Higher Education Minister Datuk Mustapha Sakrud announced that private colleges could once again offer diploma courses in nursing, ending a suspension in place

since 2010.

Mustapha said the decision was made in light of the anticipated shortage of registered nurses to meet healthcare and population demands by 2030.

In another development, Lukanisman said RM21.5mil has been allocated under the Bitara Madani programme to upgrade health clinics in Sabah.

These projects include demolishing and rebuilding 21 clinics and repairing 56 others deemed dilapidated.

He also said over 150 wooden

health clinics in Sabah have been classified as such, and efforts are underway to improve the work environment for ministry staff and clients.

"Take Klinik Kampung Takuli, for instance - the original 1,000sq ft (93sqm) wooden structure has been replaced with a 2,600sq ft (242sqm) concrete building complete with staff quarters for employees who are single," he said.

He added that this design was proposed by the Sabah Health Department and is being implemented nationwide.

AKHBAR : THE SUN  
MUKA SURAT : 3  
RUANGAN : NATIONAL

## Trainee nurse intake increased to meet demand

**KOTA KINABALU:** Starting this year, the Health Ministry has increased the number of trainee nurses from 1,000 to 2,000 as part of efforts to produce more registered nurses to meet industry needs.

Deputy Health Minister Datuk Lukanisman Awang Sauni said the number of applications from Sabah youths has also increased, adding that the efforts are also aimed at raising the quota for male nurses and encouraging the participation of various races in paramedic training.

"All these initiatives are aimed at encouraging more young people, especially Sabah youths, to participate in medical and health services in the ministry and serve the people in the 'Land Below the Wind'.

"The intakes for paramedic training from 2022 to 2024 showed that 65% of the quota was filled by those in Peninsular Malaysia, 18% in Sabah and 17% in Sarawak.

"Efforts to attract more young people to undergo training must continue to produce more nurses," he said after officiating at the Health Ministry's Sabah zone training institute convocation ceremony on Saturday.

Lukanisman said the four-day ceremony, that began on Oct 5 in Sarawak, celebrates 5,253 graduates of various programmes at training institutes across the country, adding that 699 graduates from the Sabah zone training institute received their scrolls.

On another development, Lukanisman said the government has allocated RM21.5 million to upgrade rural clinics in Sabah, Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia.

"Through this allocation, 21 rural clinics were demolished and rebuilt. The (new) clinics are very comfortable and provide a larger working space for the staff." - Bernama